

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MASERU 00882 181530Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 PC-01 SP-02
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /047 W
-----059505 190755Z /21

R 181103Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MASERU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8557
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0882

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, US, LT
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR RECRUITMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAWYER FOR
LESOTHO

REF: A. MASERU 0881, B. MASERU 0375,

1. REF B WAS SENT FROM MASERU BY PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR CAROLYN
PAYTON TRANSMITTING INTER ALIA PRIMIN JONATHAN'S REQUEST FOR A
CONSTITUTIONAL LAWYER TO BE RECRUITED BY PC FOR LESOTHO.
LAWYER REPORTEDLY WOULD WORK WITH GOL IN DRAFTING A NEW
CONSTITUTION FOR LESOTHO.

2. PCD/LESOTHO HAS EXPRESSED HIS SUPPORT (REF A) FOR FULFILLING
THE PRIMIN'S REQUEST THROUGH PC RECRUITMENT. EMBASSY HAS SERIOUS
RESERVATIONS WHETHER USG OUGHT TO PLACE ANY USG FUNDED PERSON IN
SUCH A POSITION. WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE POLITICAL
CHARGES THAT COULD ARISE DURING OR AFTER THE DRAFTING OF THE
DOCUMENT. THERE IS DEEP LATENT HOSTILITY IN LESOTHO SOCIETY OVER
THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION. IT IS A DIVISIVE, POLITICAL ISSUE.
A NEW DRAFT CONSTITUTION WILL CERTAINLY BE THE SUBJECT OF INTENSE
DEBATE AND THERE IS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY (IF A U.S. LAWYER IS
INVOLVED) THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE DRAFT
CONSTITUTION. THERE ARE POLITICAL ELEMENTS HERE WHO WOULD FIND
AMPLE GROUND IN U.S. INVOLVEMENT WITH LESOTHO'S FUTURE
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CONSTITUTION TO DAMAGE OUR POSITION AND UNDERMINE THE WHOLE
MATTER OF THE RESTORATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL RULE IN LESOTHO.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE DEPT CONSULT WITH PEACE CORPS
DIRECTOR PAYTON ON THIS MATTER AND INDICATE TO HER UNDESIRABILITY
OF PROCEEDING FURTHER TO FILL THIS REQUEST. THIS IS A POLITICAL
POSITION THAT THE PRIMIN WANTS FILLED AND IS ENTIRELY

INCONSISTANT WITH EITHER THE PEACE CORPS' TRADITIONAL FUNCTION
OR WITH PEACE CORPS' "NEW DIRECTIONS" TO SERVE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS.
THE EMBASSY IS PREPARED, TOGETHER WITH PEACE CORPS, TO CONVEY
TO GOL OUR REGRET THAT PEACE CORPS IS UNABLE TO FILL THE POSITION
FOR REASONS OUTLINED PARA 2, REF A.
STOKES

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTITUTION, ATTORNEYS, CONSULTANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MASERU00882
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780167-0327
Format: TEL
From: MASERU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780445/aaaabmfq.tel
Line Count: 68
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9b9207ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MASERU 881, 78 MASERU 375
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2934507
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR RECRUITMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAWYER FOR LESOTHO
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, EAID, US, LT, PC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9b9207ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014